

Vol. IV #15

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WORKING PAPER

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INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

Vol. IV No. 15

For Week Ending
20 April 1949

GREECE

Minor Greek crises: The Greeks have recently experienced several minor crises which are merely symptoms of the major ailments--military, political, and economic--still plaguing Greece nearly five years after liberation. The initial impetus of the guerrilla attack of early April in the Grammos area has been spent, but the guerrillas have apparently reoccupied some 200 square miles of the rugged terrain from which the Greek Army drove them with great effort in the summer of 1948. With the formation of the fourth Sophoulis cabinet, following the upset of its predecessor as a result of partisan pressure, the continuance of coalition government seems assured so long as Prime Minister Sophoulis and Foreign Minister Tsaldaris can keep the members of their parties (Liberal and Populist, respectively) in a cooperative mood within as well as outside party ranks. The recent strike of government workers over wage and price difficulties has been ended chiefly through the government's judicious handling of the matter. Small bonuses of money, food, and clothing have been awarded the civil servants, and improved wage scales are promised for 1 July. In order to finance the present settlement, however, the government had to borrow from the pension and welfare fund of the civil servants' union itself.

TURKEY

Turks may seek re-definition of Tripartite Agreement: The Turks, in their efforts to be included in Western security plans, have sought a formal US commitment. If such is not forthcoming, Turkey may possibly seek a re-definition of the UK-French-Turkish Treaty of 1939 on the ground that the treaty does not conform to present, and possibly to future, conditions.

There might well be reluctance in both Paris and London to extend firmer commitments to Turkey at this time because of objections which some members of the North Atlantic Treaty group might raise, and because of possible demands by other Eastern Mediterranean or Near

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Eastern states for similar commitments. Furthermore, neither UK nor French military strength in the Near East is what it was when the treaty was negotiated. For that reason alone, the French (in particular) might well spurn Turkey's efforts to have the treaty rejuvenated.

The Turks would doubtless argue that Turkey, through its strategic location and military strength, has much to offer to a rejuvenated mutual assistance pact, and that, besides, Turkey's record of resistance to Soviet pressure entitles it even to formal acceptance as a full member of a Western security group. The Turks might also offer (provided the US approved) to use their good offices in attempting to persuade their Arab neighbors and co-religionists to adopt a friendly attitude toward any future UK treaty proposals. Turkey's own efforts to promote friendship with the Arab states would fit in nicely with such a program.

PALESTINE

Israeli peace strategy: Israel, which has not taken pains to soothe UN sensibilities in the past, made clear last week that it intends to write its own final peace settlement with the Arab states, without going out of its way to obtain the prior approval of the UN or the Palestine Conciliation Commission (PCC). While Jewish Agency officials were underlining Israel's intention to hold New Jerusalem by announcing plans for doubling the city's 100,000 Jewish population in the next five years, Israeli representatives bluntly informed the PCC that Israel does not plan either to accept internationalization of Jerusalem or to yield ground on the other two major issues involved in a settlement: the refugee problem and the question of boundaries. The Israeli Government was represented as being unable to accept repatriation of any substantial numbers of Arab refugees in view of the strain being placed on it by the present influx of immigrants. The Israelis further indicated that they were not prepared to give up any of their holdings and would even ask for additional territory if Arab Palestine were to fall to Transjordan; although such an approach would conflict with the US "territorial compensation" formula for preserving the general lines of the 1947 partition scheme, the Israelis indicated that they counted on "changing Washington's mind" on the subject.

The Israelis were doubtless bothered by the UN General Assembly's subsequent decision to postpone a vote on Israel's application for UN

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membership and by the Pope's Good Friday appeal for internationalization of Jerusalem and other Holy Places. However, Israel is unlikely to abandon its basic premise that the UN cannot bring itself to accept the financial and military responsibility of intervening actively in Palestine. The Israelis evidently believe that they can work out an agreement for dividing up Jerusalem with Transjordan which would lessen UN qualms about the Holy Places by providing special international rights (or actual UN control) over the Christian shrines, most of which are in the Arab Old City. If Israel were to make settlements regarding the other outstanding problems, the fears of outside powers regarding the refugees and the final delimitation of boundaries could be allayed by pointing out that the Arabs had already agreed to them. In the end, although Israeli brusqueness might cost it UN membership at this session, it would obtain the settlement it wants and could then resubmit its application at the next meeting of the General Assembly.

SYRIA

Government by apathy: Colonel Zaim's coup in Syria, which might have been expected to arouse political passion and violence, has instead proved to be one of the duller revolutions in recorded history. The complete absence of any opposition to Zaim would seem to indicate that the population at large has few regrets over the ouster of President Quwatli and his entourage. At the same time, however, Zaim has been unable, after almost three weeks in power, to obtain the support of a single Syrian political leader of any stature, with the possible exception of Foreign Minister Adel Arslan. After several lesser men proved unwilling or unable to form a government, Zaim was forced to do the job himself, personally assuming the posts of Prime Minister, Minister of Interior, and Minister of Defense. Meanwhile, although Iraq and Argentina have finally recognized the Zaim regime--with Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and then the major powers likely to follow suit--the external reaction to Zaim's assumption of power has been almost equally listless. "Greater Syria" rumors have inevitably sprung up, and the Iraqi Prime Minister is reportedly discussing an Iraqi-Syrian military alliance with Zaim during his current visit to Damascus. However, both Iraq and Transjordan, with which it is allied, are probably too burdened with their own problems to wish to become involved in Syrian matters at present, while Zaim will probably shy away from close ties with his stronger Hashimite neighbors while he still has a chance of becoming the Mustapha Kemal of Syria.

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The apathy which has greeted Zaim's appearance on the stage may ultimately prove the undoing of his grandiose schemes for revitalizing Syria. Aside from his obvious inexperience in politics, he does not appear prepared to risk subverting the constitution in order to retain power over the long run, and by deciding to deal with Israel he has discarded one obvious means of whipping up popular support. Vacillation over Tapline and the French monetary agreement is further specific evidence that his regime may well become as colorless and ineffective as the one it replaced.

IRAN

Soviet-Iranian relations: Soviet Ambassador Sadchikov's sudden departure for Moscow on 15 April has emphasized the present unsettled state of Soviet-Iranian relations. Points on which Sadchikov might be consulting with the Kremlin include: (1) the alleged Iranian request for precise determination of the Soviet-Iranian border east of the Caspian Sea; (2) the changes in Soviet operations in Iran necessitated by the closing of the Soviet consulates; (3) the possibility of getting Iran to withdraw its case against the USSR from the Security Council agenda; and (4) the validity and applicability of Article VI of the 1921 treaty between the two nations, which furnishes a basis for Soviet intervention in Iran. The question of Article VI was also raised over the weekend in a Tehran newspaper report, later officially denied, that Iran had informed the USSR that it considered the 1921 treaty no longer valid in view of Iran's UN commitments.

INDIA-PAKISTAN

The Kashmir situation: Both India and Pakistan have continued to delay the attainment of a satisfactory truce agreement in Kashmir by advancing further proposals and counter-proposals regarding the terms of the truce. India's actions are apparently motivated by a desire to prevent a plebiscite in 1949 and at the same time to counter Pakistani charges of obstructionism. Pakistan, on the other hand, may be influenced by pressure from Azad authorities or by reports reaching the GOP that the strength of Kashmir state forces is being increased.

The UN Commission for India and Pakistan, seeking to end discussion of the most controversial points, submitted on 15 April to the Governments of India and Pakistan a new series of formal truce proposals, together

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with the request that the proposals be accepted within three days. These proposals include: (1) withdrawal of the Pakistani Army within seven weeks according to an established schedule; (2) withdrawal of the Indian Army within three months, also according to a stated schedule; and (3) fixing of a cease-fire line based on the actual positions of the opposing forces at the time of cease-fire. The Commission states that it will station observers in northern Kashmir and that Indian garrisons will be permitted there only if the Commission considers them necessary for the region's defense. The proposals avoid the question of disarmament or disbandment of the Azad Kashmir forces, although they provide for removal of the Pakistani Army from the area. They also counter Indian claims that Indian garrisons be posted in northern Kashmir and that administration of the region be returned by Pakistan to the state government. No word has yet been received as to Indian and Pakistani reaction to the draft agreement.

Burma seeks support from India and Pakistan: The Burmese Prime Minister recently visited New Delhi and Karachi in an effort to obtain a loan to finance Burma's exports of rice, and arms with which to quell continuing revolts of several insurgent groups against the Government of Burma. In New Delhi, he was told that financial assistance would not be considered until peace had been negotiated between the Burmese Government and the Karens. He also received no promises regarding arms, the GOI being fearful for the safety of several hundred thousand Indians now in insurgent-held territory if it became known among the insurgents that weapons were being supplied to the Government of Burma. Results of talks in Karachi have not yet been reported, but the Prime Minister will probably have no more success there than in New Delhi. If no assistance of any kind is forthcoming from either India or Pakistan, the Burmese Government will probably be forced into a new series of peace negotiations with the Karens and other dissident groups in order to maintain both its own position and the economic security of the country..

NOTED IN BRIEF

Under Turkey's new program of greater tolerance of religion, the Turkish Government is acting with caution and forethought. A report from the Naval Attache at Ankara states that, of the 7,298 beds in Turkish State Hospitals, 140 have been set aside "for malaria" (sic), 225 for trachoma, 25 for venereal diseases, 25 for rabies, and 250 for Religious Foundations.

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The UK has allocated £ one million to Transjordan for Arab refugee resettlement projects. The contribution, in the form of a long term interest-free loan, is distinct from the funds donated through the UN to the relief program. This action gives Abdullah an opportunity to show his mettle in initiating economic projects vital to his country in its role of protector for some 500,000 refugees in Transjordan and eastern Palestine.

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Although the Arab states plan to support the Tripolitanian delegation in its demands for a united, independent Libya, a member of the Lebanese delegation has hinted that the Arab states might be willing to compromise if the US would "lay off" the question of Israel. The Lebanese representative did not suggest other proposals, but it is likely that the Arab states would consider a multi-power trusteeship, including at least one Arab state, as well as trusteeship under either the Arab League or one of the Arab states.

* * *

Iranian leaders have been groping for a suitable formula for a regional pact, under which the US and UK would render assistance to any signatory threatened by the USSR. Under consideration have been: (1) an Eastern Mediterranean pact including Iran; (2) a Turko-Iranian alliance; (3) a strengthening and broadening of the Saadabad Pact, which at present calls only for consultation between Turkey, Iran, Iraq, and Afghanistan; and (4) a regional pact, as suggested by Foreign Minister Hekmat, including Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and other countries in the area. Iranian thinking on the matter will probably become less hazy after Turkish Foreign Minister Sadak returns to Ankara to report on his recent conversation with US Secretary of State Acheson.

* * *

An outcome of the Iranian Army's recently adopted policy of amicability toward the tribes is the selection of a strong tribal representation for the forthcoming Constituent Assembly. How far this policy has gone may be judged from the election to the Assembly of Ammar Khan Shikkak, the now strongly pro-US chief of the northern Kurds, who three years ago was Minister of War of the Soviet-sponsored Kurdish Peoples Republic.

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Political tension between Afghanistan and Pakistan continues, but
no significant new developments have taken place during the week.

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